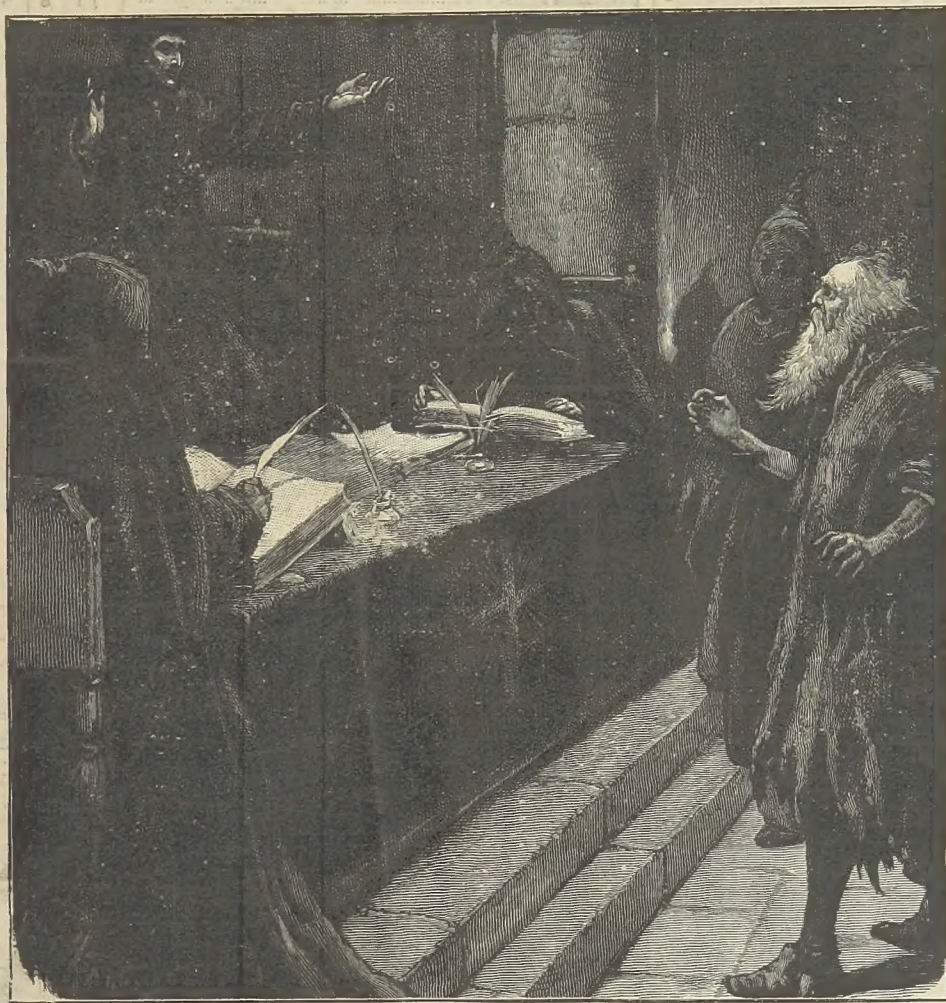


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ILLUSTRATED PENNY TALES.

FROM THE "STRAND" LIBRARY.



No. 6.—CONTAINING :—

IN THE INTERESTS OF SCIENCE *From the German.*
DR. FRESTON'S BROTHER
ZODOMIRSKY'S DUEL *From the French of Alexandre Dumas.*
THE SAVING OF KARL REICHENBERG *By Arthur Page.*

PUBLISHED AT THE OFFICES OF "TIT-BITS."

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SUNLIGHT SOAP COMPETITIONS.



232,000 Prizes of Bicycles, Watches, and **£41,904** Books, value

The First of these Monthly Competitions will be held on January 31st, 1894, to be followed by others each month during 1894.

Competitors to save as many "SUNLIGHT" Soap Wrappers as they can collect. Cut off the top portion of each wrapper—that portion containing the heading "SUNLIGHT SOAP." These (called the "Coupons") are to be sent, enclosed with a sheet of paper on which the Competitor has written his or her full name and address, and the number of coupons sent in, postage paid, to Messrs. Lever Brothers, Limited, Port Sunlight, near Birkenhead, marked on the Postal Wrapper (top left-hand corner) with the NUMBER of the DISTRICT Competitor lives in.



No. of District	For this Competition the United Kingdom will be divided into 8 Districts as under:
1	IRELAND.
2	SCOTLAND.
3	MIDDLESEX, KENT, and SURREY.
4	NORTHUMBERLAND, DURHAM, and YORKSHIRE.
5	CUMBERLAND, WESTMORELAND, LANCASHIRE, and ISLE OF MAN.
6	WALES, CHESHIRE, STAFFORDSHIRE, SHROPSHIRE, WORCESTERSHIRE, MONMOUTHSHIRE, and HEREFORDSHIRE.
7	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE, DERBYSHIRE, LINCOLNSHIRE, LEICESTERSHIRE, WARWICKSHIRE, RUTLANDSHIRE, NORFOLK, SUFFOLK, CAMBRIDGESHIRE, HUNTINGDONSHIRE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, BEDFORDSHIRE, and OXFORDSHIRE.
8	ESSEX, HERTFORDSHIRE, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, BERKSHIRE, SUSSEX, HAMPSHIRE, WILTSHIRE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE, SOMERSETSHIRE, DORSETSHIRE, DEVONSHIRE, CORNWALL, ISLE OF WIGHT, and CHANNEL ISLANDS.

The Prizes will be awarded every month during 1894, in each of the 8 Districts, as under:—

Every month, in each of the 8 districts, the 5 Competitors who send the largest number of Coupons from the district in which they reside, will each receive, at winner's option, a Lady's or Gent's "Premier" Safety Cycle, with Dunlop Pneumatic Tyres, value £20*. The next 20 Competitors will each receive, at winner's option, a Lady's or Gent's "Waltham" Stem-Winding Silver Lever Watch, value £4 4s. The next 200 Competitors will each receive a Book, published at 5s. The next 300 Competitors will each receive a Book, published at 3s. 6d. The next 400 Competitors will each receive a Book, published at 2s. 6d. The next 500 Competitors will each receive a Book, published at 2s. The next 1,000 Competitors will each receive a Book, published at 1s.

RULES.

I. The Competitions will close the last day of each month. Coupons received too late for one month's competition will be put into the next.

II. Competitors who obtain wrappers from unsold soap in dealer's stock will be disqualified. Employees of Messrs. Lever Brothers, Limited, and their families, are debarred from competing.

III. A printed list of Winners of Bicycles and Watches, and of Winning Numbers of Coupons for Books in Competitor's District will be forwarded, 21 days after each competition closes, to those competitors who send Halfpenny Stamp for Postage, but in all cases where this is done, "Stamp enclosed" should be written on the form.

IV. Messrs. Lever Brothers, Limited, will award the prizes fairly to the best of their ability and judgment, but it is understood that all who compete agree to accept the award of Messrs. Lever Brothers, Limited, as final.

* The Bicycles are the celebrated Helical (Spiral) Tube "Premier" Cycles (Highest award, World's Fair, Chicago, 1893), manufactured by the "Premier" Cycle Company, Ltd., of Coventry and 14 Holborn Viaduct, London, fitted with Dunlop 1894 Pneumatic Tyres; Salisbury's "Invincible" Lamp, Lamplight's 40% Saddle; Harrison's Gong; Tool Valve, Pump, &c.

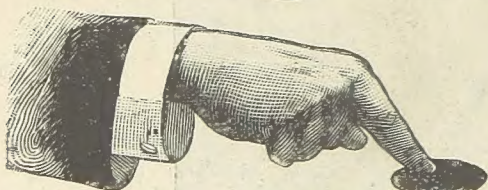
Value of Prizes given each month in each district.			Total value of Prizes in all the 8 districts during 1894		
£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
100	0	0	9600	0	0
84	0	0	8064	0	0
50	0	0	4800	0	0
52	10	0	5040	0	0
50	0	0	4800	0	0
50	0	0	4800	0	0
50	0	0	4800	0	0
50	0	0	4800	0	0
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Illustrated Penny Tales.



THE STORY OF A BURGLARY.

From the German.

ALTHOUGH I had known George Martin a long time, he had only lately initiated me into the mysteries of his life. I knew well that he had been guilty of many kinds of excesses and indiscretions in his youth, nevertheless I was not a little astonished to hear that he had once sunk so low as burglary. Without further remark, I here relate the chief episode out of the remarkable career of this strange man.

"Yes," said he, "I had a hard time of it in those days, and finally I became a—burglar! When Robert Schmiedlein proposed to me that we should break into the somewhat retired house of two doctors, Dr. Engler and Dr. Langner, I thoughtlessly agreed. Both doctors were well known on account of their scientific researches, and one of them especially for his eccentric manner.

"Well, the night fixed for the carrying out of our design arrived, and we went to work with the greatest confidence, for all the circumstances were favourable for a burglary. It was pitch dark, neither moon nor stars visible, and in addition a strong west wind was blowing, which was very welcome to us, as it promised to drown every sound, however loud.

"It was towards two in the morning as we, assuming all was safe, began by filing through a chain which fastened a ladder to the wall. The ladder we placed under a window in the first story on the left side of the house. In less than five minutes we had opened the window, and, hearing nothing, Schmiedlein climbed through it and I followed him. After carefully reclosing the Venetians we ventured to light a lantern, and then discovered that we were in a kind of lumber-room, the door of which was locked.

"After picking the lock, we determined first to explore the rooms on the ground floor, thinking we should thus run less risk of waking the inhabitants of the house.

"To our no little astonishment we perceived, as we crept downstairs, a light shining under the door of one of the rooms at the back of the building.

"At first we were both for beating a hasty retreat. Schmiedlein soon recovered himself, and proposed we should force our way into the room, bind and gag every occupant, and then obtain by threats all desirable information.

"I agreeing, we approached the door. While carefully throwing the light round, I noticed, about seven feet from the floor, a wire which appeared to pass through the door we were approaching, and on pointing it out to my companion, he thought it would be connected with some bell.

"I replied in a whisper that we should try and avoid an alarm by cutting the wire, and as I could just reach it with my hands I would hold it firm whilst Schmiedlein cut it between my hands, and thus prevent it jerking back and ringing the bell.

"Setting the lantern on the floor, I seized the wire, whilst Schmiedlein drew a pair of pincers out of his pocket. But the moment I touched it I felt a frightful shock, which quivered through and through me, so that I fell all of a heap, tearing the wire down with me. I remember hearing the loud ringing of a bell, whilst

Schmiedlein — whom, moreover, I have never seen since — disappeared like lightning into the darkness and escaped, very likely by the way we had come.

"On falling down I struck my head violently against the opposite wall and became unconscious, whilst the electric bell—at that time a novelty—rang unceasingly.

"Regaining my senses, I found myself bound and helpless, which after all did not surprise me, as I concluded I had been caught where I fell. It soon struck me, however, that there were some peculiar circumstances connected with my captivity.

"I was nearly undressed, and lay on a cold slab of slate, which was about the height of a table from the ground, and only a piece of linen protected my body from immediate contact with the stone. Straight above me hung a large



"PICKING THE LOCK."





"I FELL ALL OF A HEAP."

lamp, whose polished reflector spread a bright light far around, and when I, as far as possible, looked round, I perceived several shelves with bottles, flasks, and chemical apparatus of all kinds upon them. In one corner of the room stood two complete human skeletons, and various odds and ends of human bodies hung here and there upon the walls. I then knew I was lying on the operation—or dissecting—table of a doctor, a discovery which naturally troubled me greatly; at the same time I perceived that my mouth also was firmly gagged.

"What did it all mean? Had some accident befallen me, so that a surgical operation was necessary for my recovery? But I remembered nothing of the kind, and also felt no pain; nevertheless, here I lay, stripped and helpless, on this terrible table . . . gagged and bound, which indicated something extraordinary.

"It astonished me not a little that there should be such an operation-room in such a house, until I remembered that Dr. Langner, as the district physician, had to carry out the post-mortem examinations for the circuit, and that in the small provincial town no other room was available for such a purpose. I felt too miserable, however, to think any more about it. But I soon noticed, after another vain effort to free myself, that I was not alone in the room, for I heard the rustling of paper, and then someone said in quiet, measured tones:—

"Yes, Langner, I am quite convinced that this man is particularly suited for the carrying out of my highly important experiment. How long have I been wishing to make the attempt!—at last, to-night, I shall be able to produce the proof of my theory."

"That would, indeed, be a high triumph of human skill," I heard a second voice reply; "but consider, dear doctor, if that man there were to expire under our hands—what then?"

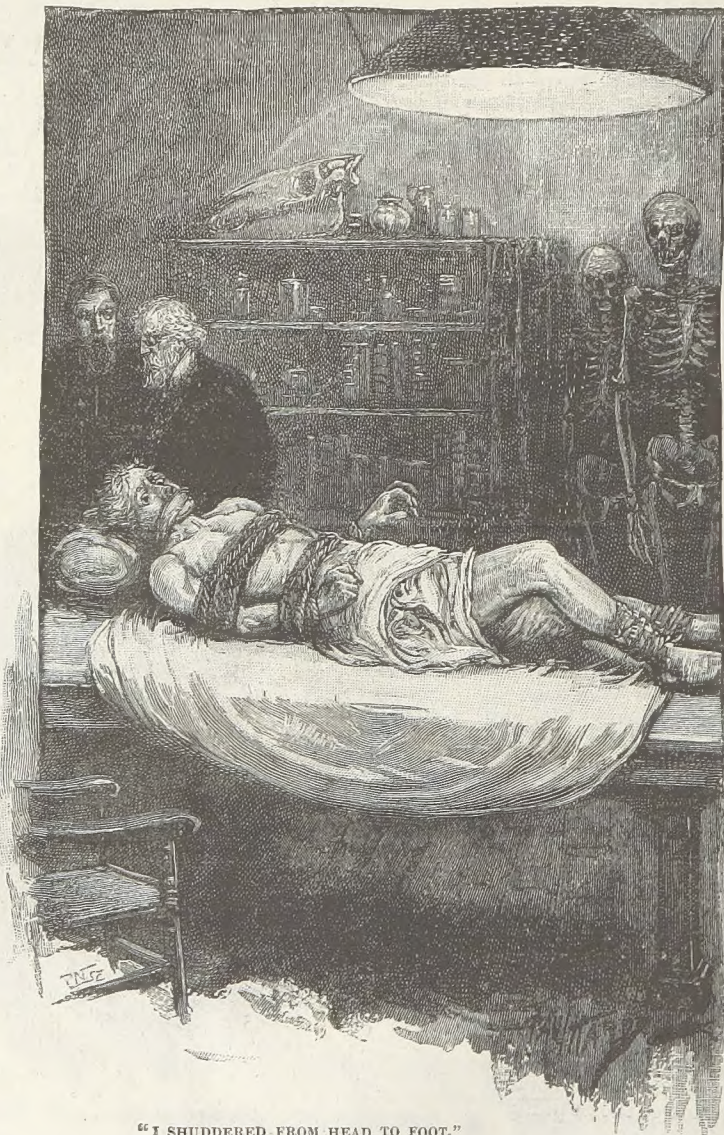
"Impossible!" was the quick reply. "It is bound to succeed, and even if it did not, he will die a glorious death in the interests of science;

whilst, if we were to let him go, he would sooner or later fall into the hands of the hangman."

"I could not even see the two men, yet their conversation was, doubtless, about me; and, hearing it, I shuddered from head to foot. They were proposing some dangerous operation on me, not for my benefit, but in the interests of medical science!

"At any rate, I thought, they won't undertake such a thing without my sanction; and what, after all, was their intention? It must be something terrible, for they had already mentioned the possibility of my succumbing. I should soon know the fearful truth, for, after a short pause, they continued:—

"It has long been acknowledged that the true source of life lies in the blood. What I wish to prove, dear Langner, is this. Nobody need die from pure loss of blood, and yet such cases occur only too often, whilst we must all the time be in possession of means to renew this highly important sap of life, and thus avoid a fatal



"I SHUDDERED FROM HEAD TO FOOT."

result. We read of a few, but only a few, cases of a man who for some reason or other has lost so much blood that his death appeared inevitable, if some other noble-hearted man had not offered his own blood, in order to let it flow from his veins into the veins of the dying man. As you are aware, this proceeding has always had the desired effect. I consider it, however, a great mistake to deprive a fellow being of necessary blood, for the one thereby only gains life and strength at the cost of another, who offers himself for an always dangerous sacrifice.

"Yes, I do not think that right either," replied Dr. Langner. "And, moreover, how seldom is a man found at the critical moment, ready to submit himself at once to such a dangerous loss of blood."

"That is very natural; no one lightly undertakes such a thing," continued the other. "So much greater will be our triumph if the operation succeeds. I hope to show you, dear colleague, that although we are thinking of taking that man's blood, even to the last drop, in a few hours we shall set him on his feet again."

"Just so! I do not see why we should not succeed. At any rate, in the interests of science we should prove in a practical manner the correctness of our theory."

"And this proof, dear friend, we will undertake without delay. Let me just repeat my instructions, for we cannot go to work too carefully to preserve the life of this man. I will open a vein in his thigh, and measure exactly the quantity of blood which flows out, at the same time watching the beating of the heart. Under ordinary circumstances nothing could possibly save him; but just before the extinction of the last spark of life, we will insert the warm blood of a living rabbit into his veins, as we have already arranged. If my theory is right, the pulsation of the heart will then gradually increase in strength and rapidity. At the same time, it is important to protect his limbs from cold and stiffness, which will naturally take place with the loss of all arterial blood."

"The conversation of the two doctors overwhelmed me with deadly terror. I could scarcely believe I was really awake, and not the victim of some cruel nightmare."

"The fact remained, however, that I lay helpless on the dissecting-table, that a threatening skeleton stood in the corner of the room, and, above all, that terrible conversation which I had to listen to in silence filled me with a fear such as I had never before experienced. Involuntarily the thought forced itself upon me that I was at the mercy of two infatuated doctors, to whose mad theory I should here fall the victim."

"I said to myself that no doctor with a sound mind would propose such a frightful and murderous experiment upon a living man."

"The two doctors now approached the dissecting-table and looked calmly into my face; then, smiling, took off their coats and tucked up their sleeves. I struggled to get free, as only a desperate man under such extraordinary circumstances could have struggled. In vain. Their long-acquired experience knew

how to render me completely helpless, and, to their satisfaction, I could not even make a sound."

"Dr. Engler now turned to a side-table, and I saw him open a chest of surgical instruments and take out a lancet, with which he returned to me. He at once removed the covering from my right thigh, and although I lay bound to the table in such a way that I could not see my limbs, I was able to watch the doctor busied with his preparations."

"Directly after removing the cloth I felt a prick in the side of my leg, and at once felt the warm blood rush forth and trickle down the limb. The conviction that he had opened the principal vein in the thigh would have sufficed to shake the strongest nerves."

"There is no danger," said Dr. Engler, looking into my staring, protruding eyes with terrible calmness. "You will not die, my good man. I have only opened an artery in your thigh, and you will experience all the sensations of bleeding to death. You will get weaker and weaker, and finally, perhaps, lose all consciousness, but we shall not let you die. No, no! You must live and astonish the scientific world through my great discovery!"

"I naturally could say nothing in reply, and no words can adequately express what I felt at that moment. I could, in one breath, have wept, implored, cursed, and raved."

"Meanwhile I felt my life's blood flowing, and could hear it drop into a vessel standing under the end of the table. Every moment the doctor laid his hand on my heart, at the same time making remarks which only increased my horror."

"After he had put his hand on me for at least the twentieth time, and felt the beating of the heart, he said to his assistant:—

"Are you ready with your preparations, Langner? He has now lost an enormous quantity of blood, and the pulsation is getting weaker and weaker. See, he is already losing consciousness," and with these words he took the gag out of my mouth."

"A feeling of deadly weakness, as well as of infinite misery, laid hold of me when the physician uttered these words, and on my attempting to speak, I found that scarcely a whispering murmur passed my lips. Shadowy

phantoms and strange colours flitted before my eyes, and I believed myself to be already in a state past all human aid."

"What happened in the next few minutes I do not know, for I had fainted. When I reopened my eyes, I noticed I no longer lay on the dissecting-table, but was sitting in an arm-chair in a comfortable room, near which stood the two doctors looking at me."

"Near me was a flask of wine, several smelling-salts, a few basins of cold water, some sponges, and a galvanic battery. It was now bright daylight, and the two doctors smiled as they looked at me."

"When I remembered the terrible experiment, I shuddered with horror, and tried to rise. I felt too weak, however, and sank back helpless into the chair. Then one of the physicians, in a friendly but firm voice, addressed me:—

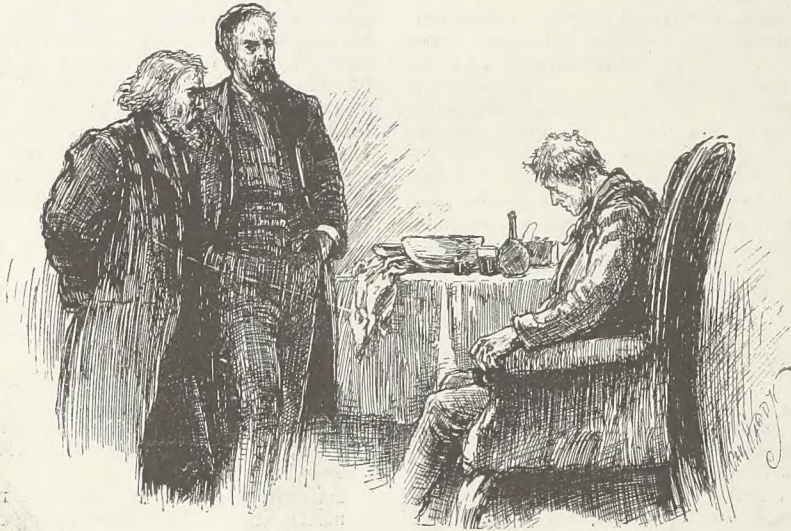


"I STRUGGLED TO GET FREE."

"Compose yourself, young man. You imagined you were slowly bleeding to death; nevertheless, be assured that you have not lost a single drop of blood. You have undergone no operation whatever, but have simply been the victim of your own imagination. We know very well you heard every word of our conversation, a conversation which was only intended to deceive you as much as possible. What I maintained was, that a man's body will always completely lie

heartless experiment by the two doctors overcame me. I was quickly interrupted by Dr. Engler, however, on trying to give free scope to my indignation.

"We had not exactly any right to undertake such an experiment with you," he said; "but we thought you would pardon us if we delivered you from certain punishment, instead of having to undergo a painful trial and a long imprisonment for burglary. You are certainly at liberty to complain about us; but consider,



"WHEN I REOPENED MY EYES I WAS SITTING IN AN ARM-CHAIR."

under the influence of what he himself firmly believes, whilst my colleague, on the other hand, held the opinion that the body can never be hurt by anything which only exists in the imagination. This has long been an open question between us, which, after your capture, we at once determined to decide. So we surrounded you with objects of a nature to influence your imagination, aided further by our conversation; and, finally, your conviction, that we would really carry out the operation of which you heard us speak, completed the deception.

"You have now the satisfaction of knowing that you are as safe and sound as ever you were. At the same time, we assure you that you really showed all the symptoms of a man bleeding to death, a proof that the body can sometimes suffer from the most absurd unreality that the mind can imagine."

"Astonishment, joy, and doubt at finding myself neither dead nor dying struggled within me, and then rage at having been subjected to such an awful and

my good fellow, if such a step is in your interests. I do not think so. On the other hand, we are quite willing to make you a fitting compensation for all the agony you have suffered."

"Under the circumstances," continued George Martin, "I considered it wise to accept their proposal, although I have not to this day forgiven the two men for so treating me."

"The doctors kept their promise. They made me a very handsome present, and troubled themselves about me in other ways, so that since that time I have been a more fortunate and, I hope, a better man. Still, I have never forgotten the hour when I lay on the dissecting-table—the unexpected victim of a terrible experiment—in the interests of science, as Dr. Engler explained."

Such was the strange story of my friend. His death, which recently took place, released me from the promise of secrecy given to him about an event which he could never recall, even after a lapse of thirty years, without a feeling of unabated horror.

Dr. Freston's Brother.

I WAS Sister in a large male surgical ward of a well-known hospital in the North of England at the time when the following incident occurred.

A few months previously one of those disastrous colliery explosions, only too common in our neighbourhood, had taken place, and eight of the men, poor fellows, all badly injured, had been brought into the Martin Ward. We all had a heavy time of it, and our house-surgeon—never very strong—had completely broken down under the strain of his devoted attention to his patients.

He had the satisfaction of seeing all the cases (with one exception) fairly started on the road to convalescence before he, too, came on the sick list, and was ordered absolute rest for several months. No man ever deserved a rest more than he.

By his constant and unwearied labours of love he had earned the blessing pronounced on Abou Ben Adhem as "One who loved his fellow men." We all greatly missed his cheery presence in the wards, and felt small interest in the doctor who came as his "locum," feeling sure that no one could take his place.

Dr. Freston, the temporary house-surgeon, however, made a favourable impression on his arrival, and soon showed that he thoroughly knew his work. He had a quiet, reserved manner, and we had worked together some days before I learned anything more about him. Then an accident, if there is such a thing, showed me the real man. One evening, on going his rounds, I reported a new case, just come in, to him. It was a man who had been found lying in the road. He had evidently fallen against the curb-stone, and had received a scalp wound. That he was a stranger in the town was proved by some papers in his pocket, showing him to have been discharged from a sailing vessel at Hull a few days previously.

"I have not made out his history yet," I said; "he seems to be very poor, and apparently has no friends."

"No friends," repeated Dr. Freston, with an expression I had not seen on his face before. "Very few of us realize what those words mean, Sister. It means more than mere friendlessness. It means a man's life without any influence for good upon it—no restraint to keep him from sinking to the lowest depths; no anchor to hold him back from suffering shipwreck on the rocks which surround us all: some seen, and some hidden ones more dangerous than all. No——!" He seemed to have forgotten he was speaking to me, and remembering, checked himself.

"We see so many of such lives in our work," I said.

"Yes," he said, slowly and absently, as if his thoughts were far away, "it must always be a sad sight, even if those who suffer are utter strangers to us."

He paused, then turned round to face me, and spoke more quickly, as if he wished to force himself to say something.

"To me it is the most painful sight of all, because I am haunted by the feeling that somewhere in this world there may now be a man who is friendless and alone through my fault. Every fresh face I see I think may be his. Every morning I wake with the thought that I may see it before night."

I looked at him with intense interest. My woman's instinct, which so seldom errs, told me that he had never spoken of this to anyone before, and that it was a great relief to speak of it now.

I longed to hear more. He seemed to read the sympathy expressed in my face, and went on more quietly.

"I had a younger brother. There were only the two of us. I was older by three years, and both in appearance and character we were totally unlike. He had been spoilt by my father, who always let him have his own way, chiefly, I fancy, on account of the strong likeness he bore to our mother, who died when we were quite young. I was at Oxford, reading for a degree previous to entering the hospital, when my father died, and I—but do I bore you? I have no right to inflict all this on you; but somehow you always look as if you were used to hearing other people's troubles: I notice everyone comes to you."

"Please, go on"; I could not say more.

"My father had had a nasty fall in the hunting field, and was almost at the last before I got to him. All his affairs were in perfect order, but he was anxious about Jack—always his first thought.



"I HAD A YOUNGER BROTHER."

"'You will look after him, Tom,' he said, 'promise me you will look after him. If you promise, I know you won't go back: a promise is a promise with you, Tom; I could always trust you.'

"I did promise, again and again, and, God knows, I meant to keep my word, and my old father died quite happy, with my promise still sounding in his ears, and his eyes resting to the last on his darling Jack. He never doubted me for a moment. How could he foresee? I am thankful he died happy. Do you think he knows now, Sister, how I kept my word?"

I shook my head, but did not speak.

"I went back to Oxford, and Jack entered the same college. That was the mistake. At a distance—if I had only seen him now and then—we might have got on well enough; but at my elbow, always bursting into my room when I wanted to read, filling his room with friends as noisy and light-hearted as himself, spending money recklessly on all sides, and turning everything

I said into a joke—all this was a daily annoyance to me. It grew intolerable. I had no sympathy at all with any of his pursuits, and I grew more cold and more reserved, until one day, exasperated more than usual, I told him that if he wanted to go to the dogs he might go by himself. His temper was as quick as mine. His sharp answer drew a sharper one from me, which roused him to a fury. 'You won't see me again,

Before leaving the ward he turned to the bedside of the patient whose friendless condition had led to our conversation. He took down the head-card to fill up the details.

"Name, Sister?"

"George Thomas."

"Age?"

"I do not know, he looks about forty; but he is very weather-beaten."

The doctor glanced at the tanned, scarred face, nearly hidden by bandages, and stood hesitating, pen in hand.

"Occupation—do you know?"

"Sailor."

"No other particulars, Sister?"

He laid the card on the table, and wiped his pen carefully—a methodical and orderly man in every detail of his work.

"I only found a few coppers and these old papers in his pocket," I said, showing the contents of a pocket-book, much the worse for wear. One crumpled piece of paper had the words, "15, Back Wells Court, Hull," written upon it; probably the address of his last lodging. I proceeded to unfold another piece, and found an old, plain, gold locket, worn thin and bright; one side was smooth, on the other was a monogram still faintly legible, "J. F."

I felt it suddenly snatched from my hands.

Dr. Freston had seized it, and, carrying it quickly across the ward, turned the gas full on, and gazed on the locket with eyes that seemed to pierce it through.

"Look, Sister!" he said, and his strong hand shook as he held it towards me, "there can be no mistake. I remember this locket so well. Jack gave it to my father with his photograph inside before he went to school, and after father died Jack kept it. It was an

old joke of theirs to take each other's things, because they were marked with the same initials. I could swear to this anywhere, and I see quite clearly how it came here. Jack met this man at Hull, perhaps he came off the same boat, and if he was hard up—but he must have been hard up before he would part with this, and then it's not much use to anyone else. No one would give a shilling for an old thing like this; but here it is, and here is the address of where the man stayed. It's the first clue I have ever had, Sister," and his face was bright with hope. "Jack may be still there: I must go without losing a minute. I may catch him before he goes on further. Is there anything else you want me for to-night?"

"And you never heard of him again?"

"No sound from that day to this. He went without money, and he could draw none except through me."

"Perhaps," I suggested, utterly at a loss what to say, "he found some work, or——"

"Work! Jack never did a day's work in his life; he was not made to work."

"Do you think that some of his friends——" I began, rather hopelessly.

"No," he replied, with a deep tone of sadness in his voice; "no; not one of his friends ever heard of him—that's four—no, five years ago. Five years—and night and day I think of those words, 'You will look after Jack, Tom.'"

There was a silence I did not know how to break.

"I think, Sister," he added, looking up with eyes which long sorrow had filled with wonderful depth of expression, "I think I should have put an end to my life before now; but I knew father's first question would be, 'Have you looked after him, Tom?'"

The door opened to admit the stretcher with a new case from the surgery, and Dr. Freston was in a moment the professional man, absorbed in investigating the extent of the new arrival's injuries.

He handed it to me without appearing to follow what I had said.

The idea of his brother being within reach had taken such hold of his mind that he could hardly endure a minute's delay before going off to seek him.

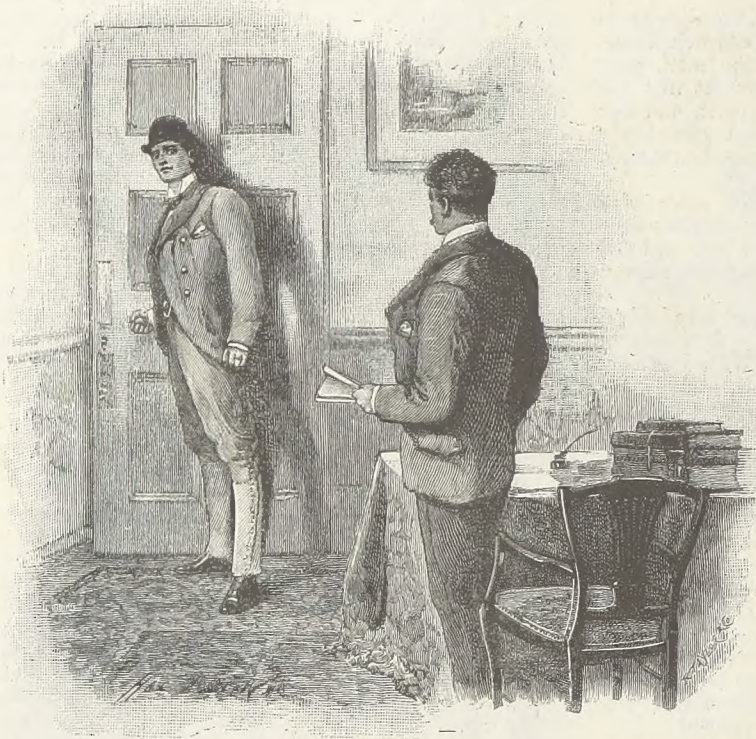
I bent over No. 7's bed.

"I found this among your things," I said. "Is it your own, or did someone sell it to you?"

He looked up quickly and suspiciously. "What do you want to know for?" he muttered.

"I only want to know whether the man who owned this first was with you at this address in Hull."

He looked at me sharply, and did not answer for a minute.



"YOU WON'T SEE ME AGAIN."



"I FOUND THIS AMONG YOUR THINGS."

"Yes," he said, slowly, "the man who owned that was there when I was," and he turned round, as if unwilling to say more.

I had learned all I wished, and repeated the information to Dr. Freston.

"Thank you very much," he said, simply. "Good night, Sister; I may not see you for a few days." He was already on the landing.

"Good night, Dr. Freston," but I doubt if he heard me. He was half-way downstairs.

Next day Dr. Freston's work was done by the junior surgeon, and the ward routine went on as usual.

I could find out nothing more of No. 7's history, except that his real age was twenty-eight. He looked at least ten years older. He had knocked about a good deal in the world, he told some of his fellow patients.

His injuries proved to be very slight, and on the evening of the second day he was allowed to sit up for a short time.

On the day following, when it was growing dusk, the door of the ward opened, and Dr. Freston came quietly in.

I saw at a glance that he had not been successful in his search. There was nothing more to be learnt at that address, he told me. The people there remembered quite well a man who gave the name of George Thomas sleeping there for one night a week ago, but they were sure they had no other lodger at the time. They knew nothing whatever about the man. He was evidently very poor, but had paid for what he had had.

I could see how keenly he felt his failure, and tried to say how grieved I was at his disappointment.

"I ought not to have built so many hopes upon so slight a foundation," he replied, with a poor attempt at a smile,

and a tone of weary sorrow in his voice. "I have waited so long that I ventured to think that perhaps at last he—" then checking himself, and with an effort turning his thoughts elsewhere—"but I am late, Sister. I must catch up my work. Have you anything for me to-night?"

"Will you sign No. 7's paper? The wound was very superficial, and Mr. Jones discharged him this morning. He is anxious to get on."

"I must speak to him first; he may be able to tell me something more," and he turned towards No. 7, sitting by the fire, and for the first time looked him in the face—the first time for five years, rather; for I saw Dr. Freston pause as if transfixed, and the next moment he was at his brother's side.

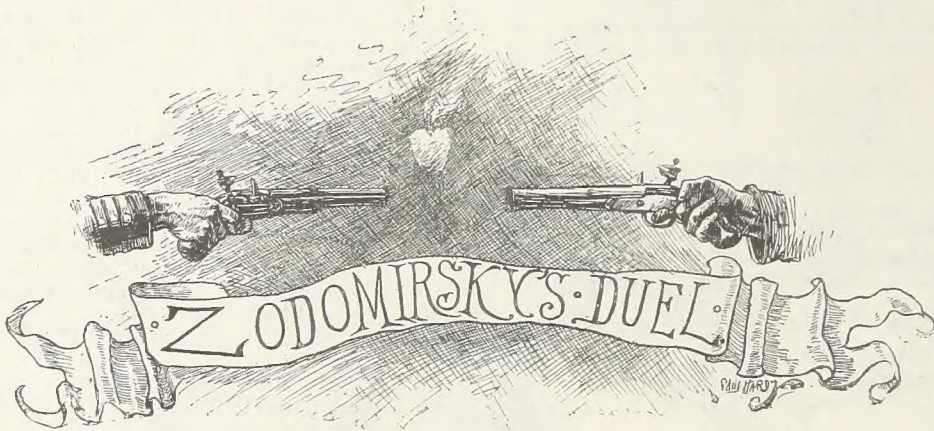
"Jack!" he said, "Jack!" and could not say another word.

But that was all he had to say. Jack had been the thought of his life, night and day, for five years. And, now Jack was here, and he held him fast, what should he say but repeat "Jack!" again and again, until he could realize that this was no dream, but rather the awakening to a better and happier life than he had known before? Jack said nothing at all. For one moment he had looked round as if wishing to escape; but, if he would, he could not. And where in the world that he had found so hard and merciless could he hope to meet the warm welcome which strove to find utterance in his brother's broken words; but, finding feeble outlet there, shone so unmistakably in his brother's happy eyes, which gazed on the ragged figure before him as if he could never look enough?

That is all the tale. It gave the patients something to talk about for a day or two, and was then forgotten, in the ward at least.

But there are three people from whose memories no act or word recorded here can ever be effaced. Need I name them? They are Dr. Freston; Jack, his brother; and myself, Tom Freston's wife.





From the French of Alexandre Dumas.

I.

AT the time of this story our regiment was stationed in the dirty little village of Valins, on the frontier of Austria.

It was the 4th of May in the year 182—, and I, with several other officers, had been breakfasting with the Aide-de-Camp in honour of his birthday, and discussing the various topics of the garrison.

"Can you tell us, without being indiscreet," asked Sub-Lieutenant Stamm of Andrew Michaelovitch, the Aide-de-Camp, "what the Colonel was so eager to say to you this morning?"

"A new officer," he replied, "is to fill the vacancy of captain."

"His name?" demanded two or three voices.

"Lieutenant Zodomirsky, who is betrothed to the beautiful Mariana Ravensky."

"And when does he arrive?" asked Major Belayef.

"He *has* arrived. I have been presented to him at the Colonel's house. He is very anxious to make your acquaintance, gentlemen, and I have therefore invited him to dine with us. But that reminds me, Captain, you must know him," he continued, turning to me; "you were both in the same regiment at St. Petersburg."

"It is true," I replied. "We studied there together. He was then a brave, handsome youth, adored by his comrades, in everyone's good graces, but of a fiery and irritable temper."

"Mademoiselle Ravensky informed me that he was a skilful duellist," said Stamm. "Well, he will do very well here; a duel is a family affair with us. You are welcome, Monsieur Zodomirsky. However quick your temper, you must be careful of it before me, or I shall take upon myself to cool it."

And Stamm pronounced these words with a visible sneer.

"How is it that he leaves the Guards? Is he ruined?" asked Cornet Naletoff.

"I have been informed," replied Stamm, "that he has just inherited from an old aunt about twenty thousand roubles. No, poor devil! he is consumptive."

"Come, gentlemen," said the Aide-de-Camp, rising, "let us pass to the saloon and have a game of cards. Koloff will serve dinner whilst we play."

We had been seated some time, and Stamm, who was far from rich, was in the act of losing sixty roubles, when Koloff announced:—

"Captain Zodomirsky."

"Here you are, at last!" cried Michaelovitch, jumping from his chair. "You are welcome."

Then, turning to us, he continued:—

"These are your new comrades, Captain Zodomirsky; all good fellows and brave soldiers."

"Gentlemen," said Zodomirsky, "I am proud and happy to have joined your regiment. To do so has been

my greatest desire for some time, and if I am welcome, as you courteously say, I shall be the happiest man in the world."

"Ah! good day, Captain," he continued, turning to me and holding out his hand. "We meet again. You have not forgotten an old friend, I hope?"

As he smilingly uttered these words, Stamm, to whom his back was turned, darted at him a glance full of bitter hatred. Stamm was not liked in the regiment; his cold and taciturn nature had formed no friendship with any of us. I could not understand his apparent hostility



"CAPTAIN ZODOMIRSKY."

towards Zodomirsky, whom I believed he had never seen before.

Someone offered Zodomirsky a cigar. He accepted it, lit it at the cigar of an officer near him, and began to talk gaily to his new comrades.

"Do you stay here long?" asked Major Belayef.

"Yes, monsieur," replied Zodomirsky. "I wish to stay with you as long as possible," and as he pronounced these words he saluted us all round with a smile. He continued: "I have taken a house near that of my old friend Ravensky, whom I knew at St. Petersburg. I have my horses there, an excellent cook, a passable library, a little garden, and a target; and there I shall be quiet as a hermit, and happy as a king. It is the life that suits me."

"Ha! you practise shooting!" said Stamm, in such a strange voice, accompanied by a smile so sardonic, that Zodomirsky regarded him in astonishment.

"It is my custom every morning to fire twelve balls," he replied.

"You are very fond of that amusement, then?" demanded Stamm, in a voice without any trace of emotion; adding, "I do not understand the use of shooting, unless it is to hunt with."

Zodomirsky's pale face was flushed with a sudden flame. He turned to Stamm, and replied in a quiet but firm voice: "I think, monsieur, that you are wrong in calling it lost time to learn to shoot with a pistol; in our garrison life an imprudent word often leads to a meeting between comrades, in which case he who is known for a good shot inspires respect among those indiscreet persons who amuse themselves in asking useless questions."

"Oh! that is not a reason, Captain. In duels, as in everything else, something should be left to chance. I maintain my first opinion, and say that an honourable man ought not to take too many precautions."

"And why?" asked Zodomirsky.

"I will explain to you," replied Stamm. "Do you play at cards, Captain?"

"Why do you ask that question?"

"I will try to render my explanation clear, so that all will understand it. Everyone knows that there are certain players who have an enviable knack, whilst shuffling the pack, of adroitly making themselves master of the winning card. Now, I see no difference, myself, between the man who robs his neighbour of his money and the one who robs him of his life." Then he added, in a way to take nothing from the insolence of his observation, "I do not say this to you, in particular, Captain; I speak in general terms."

"It is too much as it is, monsieur!" cried Zodomirsky. "I beg Captain Alexis Stephanovitch to terminate this affair with you." Then, turning to me, he said, "You will not refuse me this request?"

"So be it, Captain," replied Stamm, quickly. "You have told me yourself you practise shooting every day, whilst I practise only on the day I fight. We will equalize the chances. I will settle details with Monsieur Stephanovitch."

Then he rose and turned to our host.

"*Au revoir*, Michaelovitch," he said. "I will dine at the Colonel's." And with these words he left the room.

The most profound silence had been kept during this altercation; but, as soon as Stamm disappeared, Captain Pravdine, an old officer, addressed himself to us all.

"We cannot let them fight, gentlemen," he said.

Zodomirsky touched him gently on his arm.

"Captain," he said, "I am a new-comer amongst you; none of you know me. I have yet, as it were, to win my spurs; it is impossible for me to let this quarrel pass without fighting. I do not know what I have done to annoy this gentleman, but it is evident that he has some spite against me."

"The truth of the matter is that Stamm is jealous of you, Zodomirsky," said Cornet Naletoff. "It is well known that he is in love with Mademoiselle Ravensky."

"That, indeed, explains all," he replied. "However, gentlemen, I thank you for your kind sympathy in this affair from the bottom of my heart."

"And now to dinner, gentlemen!" cried Michaelovitch.

"Place yourselves as you choose. The soup, Koloff; the soup!"

Everybody was very animated. Stamm seemed forgotten; only Zodomirsky appeared a little sad. Zodomirsky's health was drunk; he seemed touched with this significant attention, and thanked the officers with a broken voice.

"Stephanovitch," said Zodomirsky to me, when dinner was over, and all had risen, "since M. Stamm knows you are my second and has accepted him as such, see him, and arrange everything with him; accept all his conditions; then meet Captain Pravdine and me at my rooms. The first who arrives will wait for the other. We are now going to Monsieur Ravensky's house."

"You will let us know the hour of combat?" said several voices.

"Certainly, gentlemen. Come and bid a last farewell to one of us."

We all parted at the Ravensky's door, each officer shaking hands with Zodomirsky as with an old friend.

II.

STAMM was waiting for me when I arrived at his house. His conditions were these: Two sabres were to be planted at a distance of one pace apart; each opponent to extend his arm at full length and fire at the word "three." One pistol alone was to be loaded.

I endeavoured in vain to obtain another mode of combat.

"It is not a victim I offer to M. Zodomirsky," said Stamm, "but an adversary. He will fight as I propose, or I will not fight at all; but in that case I shall prove that M. Zodomirsky is brave only when sure of his own safety."

Zodomirsky's orders were imperative. I accepted.

When I entered Zodomirsky's rooms they were vacant; he had not arrived. I looked round with curiosity. They were furnished in a rich but simple manner, and with evident taste. I drew a chair near the balcony and looked out over the plain. A storm was brewing; some drops of rain fell already, and thunder moaned.

At this instant the door opened, and Zodomirsky and Pravdine entered. I advanced to meet them.

"We are late, Captain," said Zodomirsky, "but it was unavoidable."

"And what says Stamm?" he continued.

I gave him his adversary's conditions. When I had ended, a sad smile passed over his face; he drew his hand across his forehead and his eyes glittered with feverish lustre.

"I had foreseen this," he murmured. "You have accepted, I presume?"

"Did you not give me the order yourself?"

"Absolutely," he replied.

Zodomirsky threw himself in a chair by the table, in which position he faced the door. Pravdine placed himself near the window, and I near the fire. A presentiment weighed down our spirits. A mournful silence reigned.

Suddenly the door opened, and a woman muffled in a mantle which streamed with water, and with the hood drawn over her face, pushed past the servant, and stood before us. She threw back the hood, and we recognised Mariana Ravensky!

Pravdine and I stood motionless with astonishment. Zodomirsky sprang towards her.

"Great heavens, what has happened, and why are you here?"

"Why am I here, George?" she cried. "Is it you who ask me, when this night is perhaps the last of your life? Why am I here? To say farewell to you. It is only two hours since I saw you, and not one word passed between us of to-morrow. Was that well, George?"

"But I am not alone here," said Zodomirsky, in a low



"GREAT HEAVENS! WHAT HAS HAPPENED?"

voice. "Think, Mariana. Your reputation—your fair fame——"

"Are you not all in all to me, George? And in such a time as this, what matters anything else?"

She threw her arms about his neck and pressed her head against his breast.

Pravdine and I made some steps to quit the room.

"Stay, gentlemen," she said, lifting her head. "Since you have seen me here, I have nothing more to hide from you, and perhaps you may be able to help me in what I am about to say." Then, suddenly flinging herself at his feet—

"I implore you, I command you, George," she cried, "not to fight this duel with Monsieur Stamm. You will not end two lives by such a useless act! Your life belongs to me; it is no longer yours. George, do you hear? You will not do this."

"Mariana! Mariana! in the name of Heaven do not torture me thus! Can I refuse to fight? I should be dishonoured—lost! If I could do so cowardly an act, shame would kill me more surely than Stamm's pistol."

"Captain," she said to Pravdine, "you are esteemed in the regiment as a man of honour; you can, then, judge about affairs of honour. Have pity on me, Captain, and tell him he *can* refuse such a duel as this. Make him understand that it is not a duel, but an assassination; speak, speak, Captain, and if he will not listen to me, he will to you."

Pravdine was moved. His lips trembled and his eyes were dimmed with tears. He rose, and, approaching Mariana, respectfully kissed her hand, and said, with a trembling voice:—

"To spare you any sorrow, mademoiselle, I would lay down my life; but to counsel M. Zodomirsky to be unworthy of his uniform by refusing this duel is impossible. Each adversary, your betrothed as well as Stamm, has a right to propose his conditions. But whatever be the conditions, the Captain is in circumstances which render this duel absolutely necessary. He is known as a skilful duellist; to refuse Stamm's

conditions were to indicate that he counts upon his skill."

"Enough, Mariana, enough," cried George. "Unhappy girl! you do not know what you demand. Do you wish me, then, to fall so low that you yourself would be ashamed of me? I ask you, are you capable of loving a dishonoured man?"

Mariana had let herself fall upon a chair. She rose, pale as a corpse, and began to put her mantle on.

"You are right, George, it is not I who would love you no more, but you who would hate me. We must resign ourselves to our fate. Give me your hand, George; perhaps we shall never see each other again. To-morrow! to-morrow! my love."

She threw herself upon his breast, without tears, without sobs, but with a profound despair.

She wished to depart alone, but Zodomirsky insisted on leading her home.

Midnight was striking when he returned.

"You had better both retire," said Zodomirsky as he entered. "I have several letters to write before sleeping. At five we must be at the rendezvous."

I felt so wearied that I did not want telling twice. Pravdine passed into the saloon, I into Zodomirsky's bedroom, and the master of the house into his study.

The cool air of the morning woke me. I cast my eyes upon the window, where the dawn commenced to appear. I heard Pravdine also stirring. I passed into the saloon, where Zodomirsky immediately joined us. His face was pale, but serene.

"Are the horses ready?" he inquired.

I made a sign in the affirmative.

"Then let us start," he said.

We mounted into the carriage, and drove off.

III.

"AH!" said Pravdine all at once, "there is Michaelovitch's carriage. Yes, yes, it is he with one of ours, and there is Naletoff, on his Circassian horse. Good! the others are coming behind. It is well we started so soon."

The carriage had to pass the house of the Ravenskys. I could not refrain from looking up; the poor girl was at her window, motionless as a statue. She did not even nod to us.

"Quicker! quicker!" cried Zodomirsky to the coachman. It was the only sign by which I knew that he had seen Mariana.

Soon we distanced the other carriages, and arrived upon the place of combat—a plain where two great pyramids rose, passing in this district by the name of the "Tomb of the Two Brothers." The first rays of the sun darting through the trees began to dissipate the mists of night.

Michaelovitch arrived immediately after us, and in a few minutes we formed a group of nearly twenty persons. Then we heard the crunch of other steps upon the gravel. They were those of our opponents. Stamm walked first, holding in his hand a box of pistols. He bowed to Zodomirsky and the officers.

"Who gives the word to fire, gentlemen?" he asked.

The two adversaries and the seconds turned towards the officers, who regarded them with perplexity.

No one offered. No one wished to pronounce that terrible "three" which would sign the fate of a comrade.

"Major," said Zodomirsky to Belayef, "will you render me this service?"

Thus asked, the Major could not refuse, and he made a sign that he accepted.

"Be good enough to indicate our places, gentlemen," continued Zodomirsky, giving me his sabre and taking off his coat, "then load, if you please."

"That is useless," said Stamm. "I have brought the pistols; one of the two is loaded, the other has only a gun-cap."

"Do you know which is which?" said Pravdine.

"What does it matter?" replied Stamm. "Monsieur Zodomirsky will choose."

"It is well," said Zodomirsky.

Belayef drew his sabre and thrust it in the ground midway between the two pyramids. Then he took another sabre and planted it before the first. One pace alone separated the two blades. Each adversary was to stand behind a sabre, extending his arm at full length. In this way each had the muzzle of his opponent's pistol at six inches from his heart. Whilst Belayef made these preparations Stamm unbuckled his sabre, and divested himself of his coat. His seconds opened his box of pistols, and Zodomirsky, approaching, took without hesitation the nearest to him. Then he placed himself behind one of the

sabres. Stamm regarded him closely; not a muscle of Zodomirsky's face moved, and there was not about him the least appearance of bravado, but of the calmness of courage.

"He is brave," murmured Stamm.

And taking the pistol left by Zodomirsky, he took up his position behind the other sabre, in front of his adversary.

They were both pale, but whilst the eyes of Zodomirsky burned with implacable resolution, those of Stamm were uneasy and shifting. I felt my heart beat loudly.

Belayef advanced. All eyes were fixed on him.

"Are you ready, gentlemen?" he asked.

"We are waiting, Major," replied Zodomirsky and Stamm together, and each lifted his pistol before the breast of the other.

A death-like silence reigned. Only the birds sang in the bushes near the place of combat. In the midst of this silence the Major's voice resounding made everyone tremble.

"One."

"Two."

"Three!"

Then we heard the sound of the hammer falling on the cap of Zodomirsky's pistol. There was a flash, but no report followed it.

Stamm had not fired, and continued to hold the mouth of his pistol against the breast of his adversary.

"Fire!" said Zodomirsky, in a voice perfectly calm.

"It is not for you to command, monsieur," said Stamm, "it is I who must decide whether to fire or not,

and that depends on how you answer what I am about to say."

"Speak, then; but in the name of Heaven speak quickly."

"Never fear, I will not abuse your patience."

We were all ears.

"I have not come to kill you, monsieur," continued Stamm; "I have come with the carelessness of a man to whom life holds nothing, whilst it has kept none of the promises it has made to him. You, monsieur, are rich, you are beloved, you have a promising future before you: life must be dear to you. But fate has decided against



"ARE YOU READY, GENTLEMEN?"

you : it is you who must die and not I. Well, Monsieur Zodomirsky, give me your word not to be so prompt in the future to fight duels, and I will not fire."

"I have not been prompt to call you out, monsieur," replied Zodomirsky, in the same calm voice; "you have wounded me by an outrageous comparison, and I have been compelled to challenge you. Fire, then; I have nothing to say to you."

"My conditions cannot wound your honour," insisted Stamm. "Be our judge, Major," he added, turning to Belayef. "I will abide by your opinion; perhaps M. Zodomirsky will follow my example."

"M. Zodomirsky has conducted himself as bravely as possible; if he is not killed, it is not his fault." Then, turning to the officers round, he said: "Can M. Zodomirsky accept the imposed condition?"

"He can! he can!" they cried; "and without staining his honour in the slightest."

Zodomirsky stood motionless.

"The Captain consents," said old Pravdine, advancing. "Yes, in the future he will be less prompt."

"It is you who speak, Captain, and not M. Zodomirsky," said Stamm.

"Will you affirm my words, Monsieur Zodomirsky?" asked Pravdine, almost supplicating in his eagerness.

"I consent," said Zodomirsky, in a voice scarcely intelligible.

"Hurrah! hurrah!" cried all the officers, enchanted with this termination. Two or three threw up their caps.

"I am more charmed than anyone," said Stamm, "that all has ended as I desired. Now, Captain, I have shown you that before a resolute man the art of shooting is nothing in a duel, and that if the chances are equal a good shot is on the same level as a bad one. I did not wish in any case to kill you. Only I had a great desire to see how you would look death in the face. You are a man of courage; accept my compliments. The pistols were not loaded." Stamm, as he said these words, fired off his pistol. There was no report!

Zodomirsky uttered a cry which resembled the roar of a wounded lion.

"By my father's soul!" he cried, "this is a new offence, and more insulting than the first. Ah! it is ended, you say? No, monsieur, it must re-commence, and this time the pistols shall be loaded, if I have to load them myself."

"No, Captain," replied Stamm, tranquilly, "I have given you your life, I will not take it back. Insult me if you wish, I will not fight with you."

"Then it is with me whom you will fight, Monsieur Stamm," cried Pravdine, pulling off his coat. "You have acted like a scoundrel; you have deceived Zodomirsky and his seconds, and if in five minutes your dead body is not lying at my feet, there is no such thing as justice."

Stamm was visibly confused. He had not bargained for this.

"And if the Captain does not kill you, I will!" said Naletoff.

"Or I!" "Or I!" cried with one voice all the officers.

"The deuce! I cannot fight with you all," replied Stamm. "Choose one amongst you, and I will fight with him, though it will not be a duel, but an assassination."

"Reassure yourself, monsieur," replied Major Belayef, "we will do nothing that the most scrupulous honour can complain of. All our officers are insulted, for under their uniform you have conducted yourself like a rascal. You cannot fight with all; it is even probable you will fight with none. Hold yourself in readiness, then. You are to be judged. Gentlemen, will you approach?"

We surrounded the Major, and the fiat went forth without discussion. Everyone was of the same opinion.

Then the Major, who had played the rôle of president, approached Stamm, and said to him:—

"Monsieur, you are lost to all the laws of honour. Your crime was premeditated in cold blood. You have made M. Zodomirsky pass through all the sensations of a man condemned to death, whilst you were perfectly at ease, you who knew that the pistols were not loaded. Finally, you have refused to fight with the man whom you have doubly insulted."

"Load the pistols! load them!" cried Stamm, exasperated. "I will fight with anyone!"

But the Major shook his head with a smile of contempt.

"No, Monsieur Lieutenant," he said, "you will fight no more with your comrades. You have stained your uniform. We can no longer serve with you. The officers have charged me to say that, not wishing to make your deficiencies known to the Government, they ask you to give in your resignation on the cause of bad health. The surgeon will sign all necessary certificates. To-day is the 3rd of May: you have from now to the 3rd of June to quit the regiment."

"I will quit it certainly; not because it is your desire, but mine," said Stamm, picking up his sabre and putting on his coat.

Then he leapt upon his horse, and galloped off towards the village, casting a last malediction to us all.

We all pressed round Zodomirsky. He was sad; more than sad; gloomy.

"Why did you force me to consent to this scoundrel's



"A LAST MALEDICTION"

conditions, gentlemen?" he said. "Without you, I should never have accepted them."

"My comrades and I," said the Major, "will take all the responsibility. You have acted nobly, and I must tell you in the name of us all, M. Zodomirsky, that you are a man of honour." Then, turning to the officers:

"Let us go, gentlemen, we must inform the Colonel of what has passed."

We mounted into the carriages. As we did so we saw Stamm in the distance galloping up the mountain side from the village upon his horse. Zodomirsky's eyes followed him.

"I know not what presentiment torments me," he said, "but I wish his pistol had been loaded, and that he had fired."

He uttered a deep sigh, then shook his head, as if with that he could disperse his gloomy thoughts.

"Home," he called to the driver.

We took the same route that we had come by, and consequently again passed Mariana Ravensky's window. Each of us looked up, but Mariana was no longer there.

"Captain," said Zodomirsky, "will you render me a service?"

"Whatever you wish," I replied.

"I count upon you to tell my poor Mariana the result of this miserable affair."

"I will do so. And when?"

"Now. The sooner the better. Stop!" cried Zodomirsky to the coachman. He stopped, and I descended, and the carriage drove on.

Zodomirsky had hardly entered his house when he saw me appear in the doorway of the saloon. Without doubt my face was pale, and wore a look of consternation, for Zodomirsky sprang towards me, crying:—

"Great heavens, Captain! What has happened?"

I drew him from the saloon.

"My poor friend, haste, if you wish to see Mariana alive. She was at her window; she saw Stamm gallop past. Stamm being alive, it followed that you were dead. She uttered a cry, and fell. From that moment she has never opened her eyes."

"Oh, my presentiments!" cried Zodomirsky, "my

presentiments!" and he rushed, hatless and without his sabre, into the street.

On the staircase of Mlle. Ravensky's house he met the doctor, who was coming down.

"Doctor," he cried, stopping him, "she is better, is she not?"

"Yes," he answered, "better, because she suffers no more."

"Dead!" murmured Zodomirsky, growing white, and supporting himself against the wall. "Dead!"

"I always told her, poor girl! that, having a weak heart, she must avoid all emotion——"

But Zodomirsky had ceased to listen. He sprang up the steps, crossed the hall and the saloon, calling like a madman:—

"Mariana! Mariana!"

At the door of the sleeping chamber stood Mariana's old nurse, who tried to bar his progress. He pushed by her, and entered the room.

Mariana was lying motionless and pale upon her bed. Her face was calm as if she slept. Zodomirsky threw himself upon his knees by the bedside, and seized her hand. It was cold, and in it was clenched a curl of black hair.

"My hair!" cried Zodomirsky, bursting into sobs.

"Yes, yours," said the old nurse, "your hair that she cut off herself on quitting you at St. Petersburg. I have often told her it would bring misfortune to one of you."

If anyone desires to learn what became of Zodomirsky, let him inquire for Brother Vassili, at the Monastery of Troitza.

The holy brothers will show the visitor his tomb. They know neither his real name nor the cause which, at twenty-six, had made him take the robe of a monk. Only they say, vaguely, that it was after a great sorrow, caused by the death of a woman whom he loved.



"HE THREW HIMSELF UPON HIS KNEES BY THE BEDSIDE

The Saving of Karl Reichenberg.

By Arthur Page.

THE streets of Seville were almost deserted ; here and there a solitary human being hurried as fast as the heat would allow to his home, for the sultry air of the evening gave warning of the approach of a storm. Only Dr. Karl Reichenberg felt neither the loneliness of the streets nor the hush before the tempest ; his wild eyes gleamed with excitement, and his steps were now hurried, now slow and uncertain.

Science is to her children as the apple of their eye, and they pursue her even when she hides herself and baffles their long researches. But Science has her rewards also, and Dr. Karl had seen a great reality growing out of the deep obscurity in which he had groped so long. He who had toiled through sleepless nights, burning the midnight oil, earning from his neighbours the name of wizard, had triumphed at last : he had made a glorious discovery, and had seen the Unseen. Wherefore his heart was glad within him, his brain was mad with a whirling ecstasy of joy, his limbs trembled, and his feet could scarce bear him. Was not he, the poor German Jew, a stranger in the tents of the proud Spaniard, who despised him or else feared—was not he now exalted and his name great among the nations ?

Suddenly a hand was laid upon his shoulder, and a deep, sepulchral voice uttered these words : "The Holy Mother Church hath need of thee !" Turning, he saw two sinister figures clothed in sombre-hued robes which, reaching down to the

ground, rose to a point above the head, entirely concealing form and face, except for the eyelet holes. A strong fit of shuddering seized the poor man : he saw in those two weird forms the familiars of the Holy Inquisition. His tongue clave to the roof of his mouth, and at a sign from one of them, unable to resist, he silently followed with tottering feet. All round the high walls of the houses rose menacingly, not a light in any window ; above, the clouds hung low and lurid, while a deep muttering of distant thunder filled the still air. Onward his ghostly attendants bore him, seeming to glide without perceptible effort over the rough flagged pavement, his own heavy feet giving forth a muttered resonance on the pathway. In the distance he heard a sound of heavy tramping and loud talking ; it was the watch patrolling the streets. Nearer and nearer they came, till he saw the gleam of the lantern at the further end of the street, and a sudden hope of escape rushed to his head, leaving him breathless and half stunned. He would call upon them as they passed, and offer them much money, all he possessed, to release him from these devils. Now the watch was close upon them, was passing ; he could plainly hear one telling some coarse joke and the rude laughter it drew forth from his comrades : he strove to call out, but his parched lips refused to form the words, and in a moment they had turned a corner. All was silent again.

On they sped, this strange company, through the inky pall that overspread the city, always passing on, till it seemed to the wretched prisoner that he and his voiceless companions had travelled from the beginning of time, and would do so till the crack of doom, when, on a sudden, his guards stopped before a low doorway set in a vast dead wall, which reached upwards to the clouds. On this door one of the familiars beat a stealthy knock ; it swung open inwards and closed behind them ; the darkness of without was changed for the gloom of within. They had now entered a long corridor, at the further end of which a lamp hung, shedding a tiny, twinkling light ; through the whole length of this passage the familiars led Reichenberg, down a long flight of steps ; down into deeper and clammier passages, where he could feel the icy moisture dripping from the walls, till at last a door was opened, he was pushed into the darkness, and the door swung to heavily. He listened in a dull, unhearing way to the grating sound of heavy bolts drawn to, and he heard the footsteps of the two familiars die away in the distance. Then his voice and strength returned to him, and he rose and threw himself against the door of his cell, screeching and foaming at the mouth. For an hour he raved on, and then, overcome by exhaustion, he sank down on the dark cold floor of his cell. Hours, days, months passed, he knew not



"SUDDENLY A HAND WAS LAID UPON HIS SHOULDER."

how long ; time had no more an existence to him, for no light of day could pierce the solid masonry which surrounded him. But ever there came at intervals footsteps that approached, a grating opened, a loaf of bread and a jar of water were thrust in, and the footsteps died away in the distance. Sometimes he would sleep and dream wild, fitful dreams of unclouded sky and green fields ; once he dreamed of his discovery, and awoke trembling, with great drops of sweat upon him. Then the madness of despair seized him, and again he engaged in hopeless strife with the cold and passive dungeon walls. But this fit lasted but a short time ; day by day he grew weaker, and the power of speech went from him, and he lay down to die.

One day he heard more footsteps. They approached, and stopped before his door. It was opened, and the yellow light of a lantern filled the cell. Reichenberg did not move, only he raised his sunken eyes as a voice, soft and low, addressed him :—

"Son, thy presence is required elsewhere. Rise and follow me !"

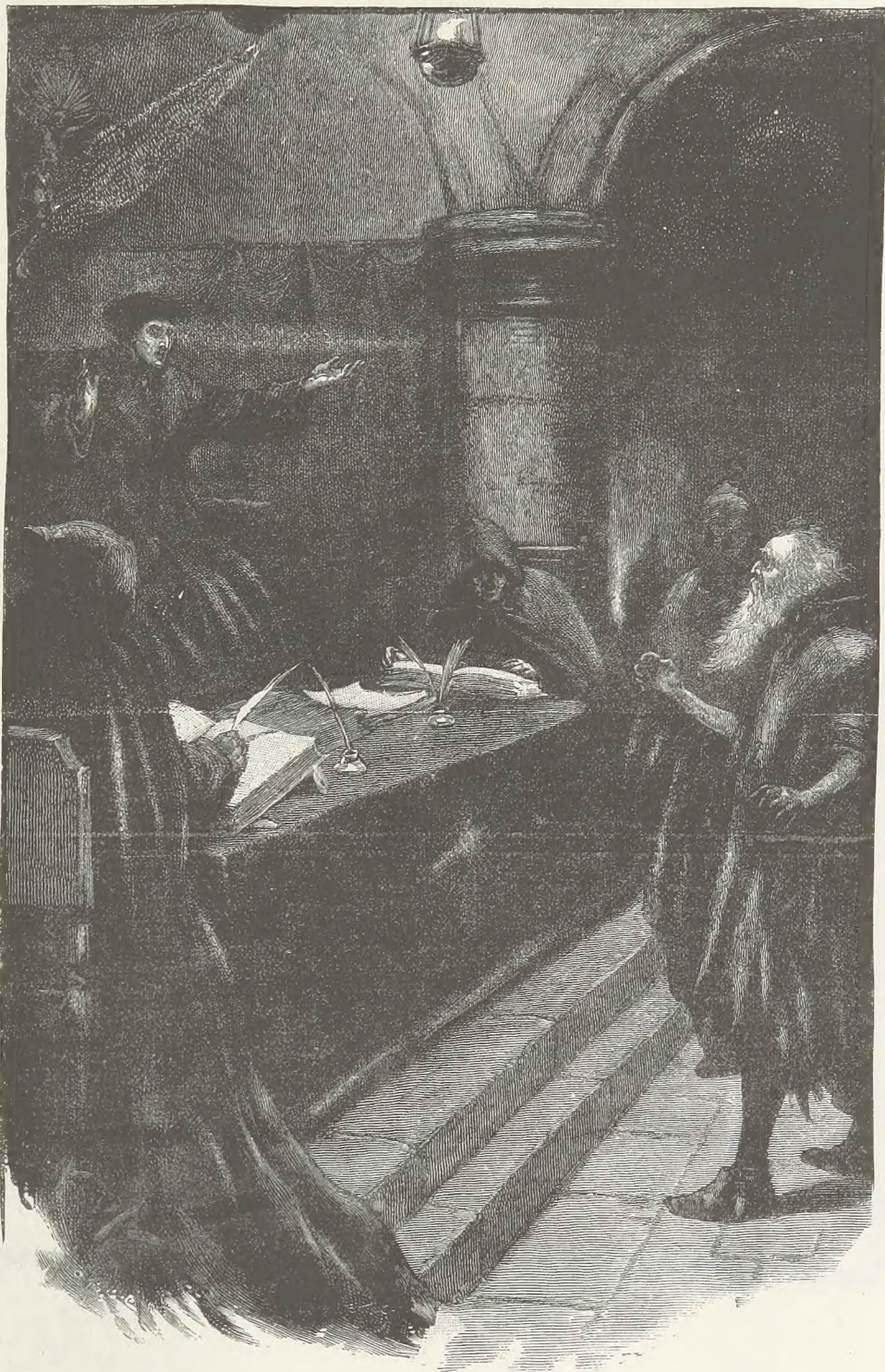
The wretched man raised himself with difficulty, and two familiars assisted him tenderly up the interminable steps and along the endless corridor, while ever the lantern preceded them ; and the soft voice spoke again :—

"Be of good cheer, my son, thy trials are almost ended !"

Another door was reached and opened. The Jew stood in a lofty, vaulted chamber, dimly lighted by three silver lamps hanging from the roof. At a table on the further side sat two men clothed in the black garb of the Inquisition, the table before them being covered with large manuscript volumes, and between them was a raised throne, unoccupied as yet. In a dark corner stood a brazier of burning coals, and over it crouched a wizened, bent figure, its face hidden by a hideous mask, occupied in

twisting and turning in the flames some curious steel instruments. The whole place seemed to be filled with the echo of the last victim's groans.

He who had spoken in the gentle voice now took his place on the raised throne behind the table, and lifted a pair of wistful brown eyes, full of suffering and pity. Then Reichenberg perceived that he was in the presence of the Inquisitor-General, Don Philippo del Alguarez, and for very fear had almost fallen. Don Alguarez addressed him in a smooth, even voice :—



"BEFORE THE INQUISITOR."

"Reverend Doctor Karl Reichenberg, thou art a Jew and a heretic. Is it not so?"

The poor wretch tried to speak, but could not, and simply moved his head, while the Inquisitor proceeded:—

"Thou hast had dealings with the Evil One in divers manners and places, and wouldst have sold thyself body and soul to him. But the Holy Mother Church lets not her sons thus lose their immortal souls; wherefore hath she imposed punishment upon the carnal flesh, thereby to snatch their spiritual being from destruction. Satan hath desired thee, my son, but thy sufferings, which have endured but a little time, have freed thee from the meshes of thy wickedness, and now thou art free," and at the words a tender smile illumined his face.

Reichenberg had listened without hearing; but at the word "free" he started, stood upright, and stumbled towards the door. But Don Philippo raised his arm, and gently waved him back.

"One other word have I yet to speak to thee. Seeing how great a mercy the Holy Church hath extended to thee, she requireth but a slight service at thy hands before thou goest forth; surely thou wilt not refuse to render thanks for thy great deliverance?"

Rising from his seat he slowly made his way to the door, and, with the words, "Follow me," passed from the chamber and into the corridor.

With a strange joy in his eyes, the Jew followed him, stumbling again and again in his eagerness, till they came to a high-roofed, spacious chapel, through whose stained windows the glorious sunlight streamed in. The prisoner drew a long breath; this was the living world; he had been raised from the grave.

The chapel was filled with a crowd of monks and priests, all waiting for the service to begin. Through these the Inquisitor led him, right up to the organ, where, taking him by the hand, he spoke again, still in the sweet, mournful tones.

"Son, 'tis required of thee to take upon thyself a menial office, yet one that will show thy gratitude to Heaven; for thou must needs work the bellows of this organ. But," and here he led the Jew to a small cell, lit by a single lamp, "thou must not let the wind fail, or surely a terrible doom will be thine; for yon great block" (pointing to a black mass which seemed to hang from the roof) "will descend and crush out thy life.

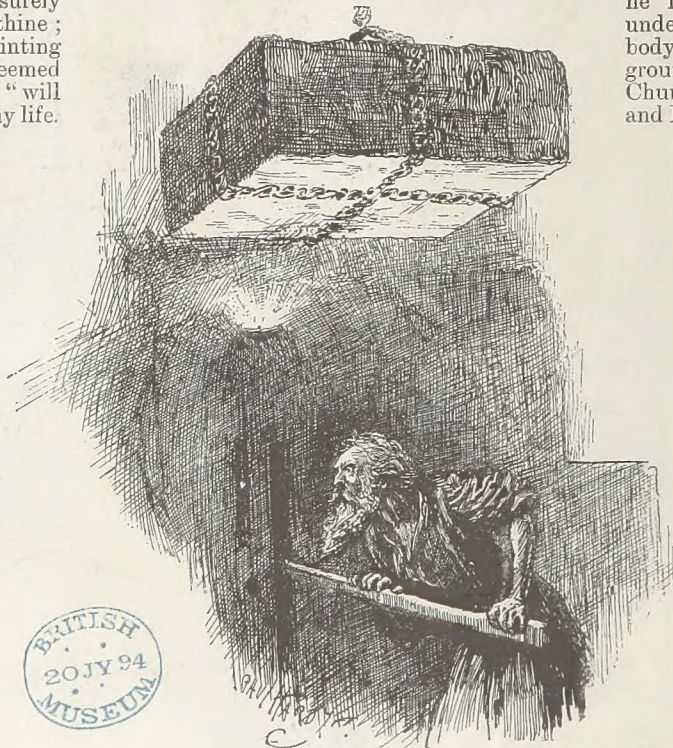
But fear not, thy task is light, and soon shalt thou be free in the light of day."

With these words, he closed the massive, cage-like door upon the Jew, bolting and barring it securely. Reichenberg seized the wooden lever, and with a convulsive energy depressed and raised it. From without there came the sweet, deep tones of the voluntary; then this ceased, and the whole congregation joined in the triumphant notes of the *Gloria in excelsis*. Gradually, to his horror, Reichenberg found that his frame, never physically strong, had been so wasted by the horrors of confinement that he could hardly keep the little leaden register below the mark that showed the wind in the bellows was exhausted. To his feverish brain the cell was peopled with devils taunting him, pulling up that little piece of lead on which his life hung, till it seemed to fly up towards the mark, and pointing with mocking gestures to the overhanging mass; and, strangest of all, they every one had the same face, a countenance grave and melancholy, lit up by a sad, sweet smile—the face of the Grand Inquisitor.

Seized with a sudden despair, he fell down on the ground, and lay almost in a faint, gazing with a horrid stare at the great weight above. The register had reached the mark, the moment had come, when, with a spring, the Jew hurled himself on the wooden arm, and, with redoubled strength, again filled the bellows with air. Then the triumphal chant changed to the soft tones of the *Nunc dimittis*; the leaden register moved but slowly up the wall, and Reichenberg knew his task was almost ended. But the lever seemed to have grown heavier, he could hardly move it; he could not, his arm was weaker than a child's, and he sank back on the ground. With his eye fixed on the register he saw it mount slowly up to the mark, while the sweet chords rose and fell outside in the chapel. It had almost reached the top. He strove to rise, fell back, and the notes of the last chord ended in a despairing shriek, drowned by the fall of a heavy mass.

The door opened, and the Inquisitor entered with four familiars.

"His task is finished, and he is free. Take him from under and carry forth his body, and lay it in consecrated ground, for the Holy Mother Church hath saved his soul!" and Don Philippo turned away.



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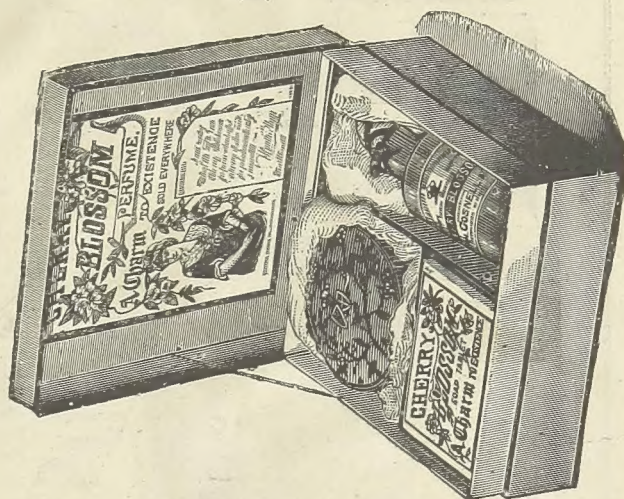
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